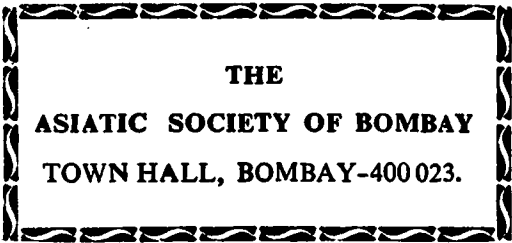


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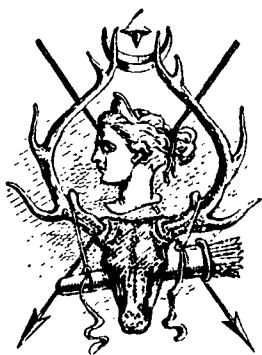


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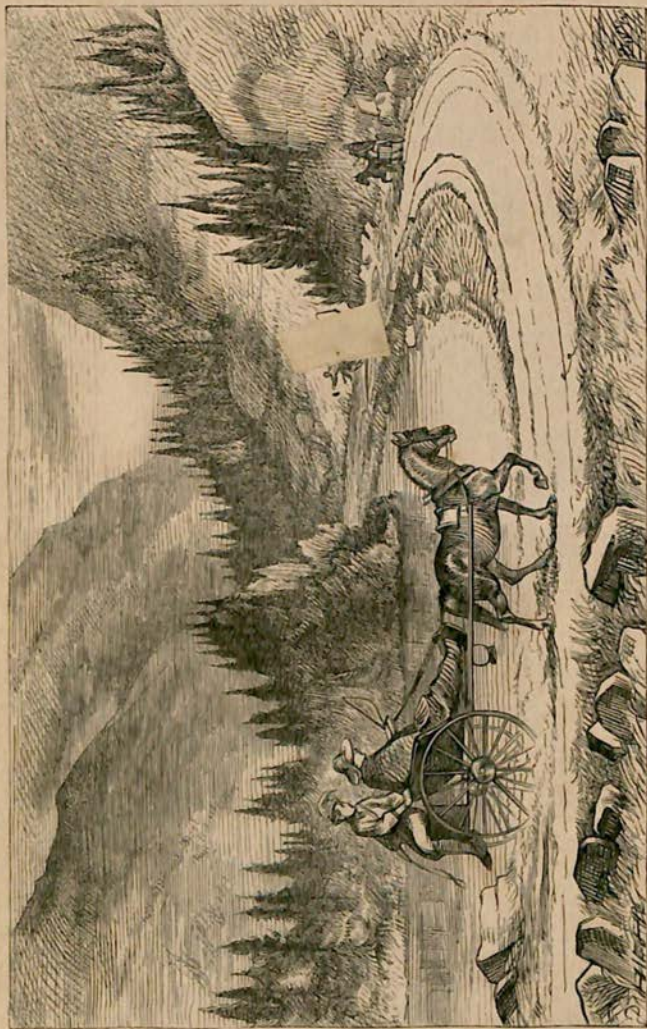


**THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY-400 023.**

LADY DI BEAUCLERK



IN NORWAY



TRAVELLING IN NORWAY

A
SUMMER AND WINTER
IN
NORWAY.

60912
BY LADY DI BEAUCLERK.

ILLUSTRATED BY THE AUTHOR'S SKETCHES

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET
1868



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PREFACE.

N publishing this little narrative of our doings in Norway, I am fully conscious of its numerous imperfections and shortcomings.

With that impression I feel sure my friends will not criticise too severely my feeble attempt to give them an account of our daily movements.

I do not for a moment imagine my little book will interest the general public. But there may be some few of my many acquaintances who might be tempted by these extracts from our journal to make a similar excursion.

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A SUMMER AND WINTER

IN

NORWAY.



CHAPTER I.

IN the summer of 1867, after due consideration, my mother, always anxious for my happiness and comfort, came to the conclusion, that a change from the ordinary routine of our life, such as visits to country houses, trips to Scotland, and such-like pleasant doings, might be made with advantage

by our striking out a new route for ourselves; and thus came about MY TRIP TO NORWAY.

I say it not unkindly, but when our friends were told what we proposed to do, how we were laughed at! What kind and excellent advice was given to us! What terrible dangers we were told stood in our path! The unprotected females often spoken of, often written about, and who somehow, when the story is told, generally manage remarkably well, and, if we may judge from their journals, return to their homes unchanged and unhurt,—these ladies were held up to us as a warning; and we listened with some wonder, a mild amount of fear, and, I may add, with great confidence in our own resources.

Even now, when I look back on the

very happy months, that have passed away so pleasantly and quickly, I wonder our courage failed us not. What were the perils? Climate trying, winter severe, doctors doubtful, ice plentiful, food in the inverse ratio. Indeed, some of our kindest friends arrived at the conclusion that we were likely to be turned into Laplanders; nor is it by any means certain that some of our acquaintance did not confound our plans with an expedition to the North Pole, with a Sir J. Franklin discovery in the distance. We listened to all these arguments and remonstrances; but we steadily prepared for the trip we had determined to carry out.

At the same time we accepted gratefully the hints and advice given us by our friends, and especially by those whose

travelled knowledge could tell us of things which, as it proved, added materially to our comfort during our sojourn in Norway.

Then came the first difficulties—what to take, what to leave behind. One friend, deeply anxious for our welfare, said, Take beds, whatever you do: we did so, and never used them. Said another, Take supplies, rely on Fortnum and Mason for your existence. Experience has since told us that all these fears were groundless; from the moment we landed in Norway we found no want unsupplied.

As the day approached for our departure, there were moments when feelings which might be likened to sorrow suggested themselves to our minds, at the possible separation for a lengthened

period from dear and kind relations and friends—feelings strengthened by the regrets and fears of those we left behind ; but we had rushed, perhaps blindly, on our fate, and there was now no power of withdrawing or changing our plans ; again, there was the breaking up, to a certain degree, of our household, packing of boxes, and all those evidences of change so displeasing to the eye accustomed to order and neatness ; but the work steadily progressed, all was settled, and we were to start for Norway.

The season was drawing to a close. That exhaustion which appears to tell upon everything within the range of London life in the month of July became self-evident. My brother's marriage—an event deeply interesting to us all, and tending greatly to our happiness—had

taken place. The world was moving in its various directions, regulated by pleasure and necessity; and so we two unprotected females, my mother and myself, betook ourselves, one hot summer's day, to Wapping's dirty streets and dismal wharves, and after perils far exceeding anything that Norway can produce—perils by land, by waggons, bridges, docks, and drivers—succeeded in securing berths on board the 'North Star' steamer, bound to Christiania on July 25.

The day at length arrived when all the perils foretold by friends were to begin to fall upon us. I confess that I looked anxiously at the morning of the 25th of July. It certainly was not a sunny day, although the atmosphere was warm and soft, without wind. Our baggage was to be sent off in the afternoon,

and we were to take possession of our share of the 'North Star' at some hour between ten and twelve at night. Never shall I forget that drive to the Newcastle Wharf. It was a dark gloomy evening, which seemed almost to foreshadow the evils anticipated by our many friends; and the silence and desert-like appearance of the city, which I had only seen in all the noise and bustle of daily life, appeared so strange to me. At the hour we passed along not a single vehicle of any sort interfered with our progress. After passing the Tower, and plunging into all those mysterious places where high walls, houses, bridges, and portions of ships suddenly appear before the unlearned traveller, we arrived at the Newcastle Wharf. Here, under the cheerful influence of two very ill-trimmed lamps,

a somewhat difficult staircase, a highly-flavoured warehouse, and numerous very skilful contrivances to reach the 'North Star,' by which you appear to climb up very suddenly, and descend very abruptly, we found ourselves at last on the deck of the steamer.

First impressions go a long way, and here they were decidedly the reverse of agreeable. They were taking in cargo, as I was afterwards told, and I conclude—though this I was not told—that they were oiling the engines; but the noise was great, the confusion greater, and the smell of oil more overpowering than the noise and confusion combined. We did what all travellers, young or old, are sure to do—called the stewardess, and requested to see the so-called accommodation in which we were to take our plea-

sure for the next three or four days. The cabin was a comfortable one ; but for a brief period there were grave doubts whether another lady, of somewhat stout proportions, was not to share it with my mother, myself, and our maid Teresina. However, fortune favoured us, and it ended in our having the cabin all to ourselves. I was glad to escape to the upper deck whilst my mother and our maid made all the necessary arrangements for our comfort. It was very dark, a thunderstorm was gathering, the lightning was flashing vividly in the horizon ; but I sat happy and contented, my mind fully occupied with varied thoughts, hopes, and fears, till thunder and drops of rain and my mother's voice from below compelled me to descend to our cabin.

CHAPTER II.



AT about two o'clock in the morning noises most loud, concussions most numerous, and language powerful in every sense of the word, told us poor women that our journey had indeed begun. As the captain afterwards explained, we were hauling out and dropping down the river. My next recollection brings me to a dark close gloomy morning in a still darker cabin; neither my mother nor Teresina looked as if their slumbers, however sound, had been the least refreshing; and our toilets, performed under such dreary influences, were, to say the least, not such as to be recalled with

satisfaction or pleasure. And then came breakfast, and the first meeting with our fellow-passengers, with whom we were to pass the next four days,—an agreeable party of ladies and gentlemen, all exceedingly courteous, who, no doubt, criticised us severely, and possibly felt pity for our unprotected state.

The atmosphere was, however, so close that we were glad to go on deck. Not so Teresina, who already began to show signs that sea voyaging was not one of the many occupations for which Nature had qualified her. Long before we came to the Nore, poor Teresina was in a helpless state, and at last the stewardess carried her off to her own berth; and she was seen no more till we landed at Christiansand.

My mother discussed the weather with

the pilot, and prophesied a bad passage : there was not a breath of wind, but very heavy dark clouds towards evening kept rising up, and though both the pilot and the captain spoke confidently of our chances of a good passage, my belief was that my mother was right. An unpleasant ground-swell began to be felt ; and, if the truth must be told, I followed in the footsteps of Teresina, retired to my cabin, and remained there for the rest of the voyage.

My mother's prophecy turned out true. On Saturday, the 27th, we found ourselves in the centre of a very severe storm. The captain afterwards told me it deserved to be called a hurricane. The ship was light of cargo, and heeled over fearfully, and the sea washed over us. Not one of the passengers could go

on deck, and in fact we were all 'battered down' below. What misery it was—the helplessness of every one—the calls for the steward—the absence of all eating, and the desire for soda-water—I can remember nothing more, except, indeed, that my mother, who really did not suffer, had made her sleeping arrangements in a berth which the captain described as 'athwart ship,' and had so placed herself that, with the ship heeling over, her feet were at least ten degrees higher than her head; and there she remained, in spite of all my entreaties. Why she did not have a fit is to me a mystery to this day.

That we were in some danger there is no doubt. The ship, from being too light, drifted closer to land than was desirable; but all this we only knew

when the perils were passed. As the weather moderated I heard symptoms in the saloon that the sufferings of some of our companions had disappeared, and the noise of knives, forks, and glasses at stated hours convinced me that the food provided was undoubtedly appreciated. A large number of the passengers was bent on pleasure. One small boy confessed, towards the end of the voyage, that he had run away from home, and promised to be good for evermore if he was taken back again. As we approached the coast of Norway, the weather improved, the sky became clear, the days bright, and the nights most beautiful; but, alas! I had not recovered sufficiently to enjoy anything, and was compelled to remain in my little stuffy cabin. How glad I was when early one morning my

mother told me we were approaching Christiansand, and on Monday, the 29th, we landed for two or three hours.

The change was delightful, and I thought our first breakfast at the hotel perfectly delicious, and quite different from any I had seen before. The table was covered with plates of cold meat; there were also hot dishes; in fact, fish, flesh, and fowl in profusion; above all, fresh lobsters, and ice in abundance; moreover, we duly appreciated a table devoid of motion. The gardens were full of flowers, and moss roses in great luxuriance.

We returned on board with regret, having had but little time to see the town, which looked clean and strikingly situated; the harbour very fine. At twelve we steamed off for Christiania.

The day was beautiful, and the sea calm; and, for the first time, we began to establish friendly relations with our fellow-passengers, circumstances over which I had no control having made it hitherto quite impossible to do so. Sitting on the deck, and coasting up towards the Fjord, was truly delightful; and my first appearance at the dinner table approximated to a sensation. We did not enter the Fjord till dark.

I was up early on the morning of the 30th: the atmosphere was quite delicious, and the approach to Christiania lovely. At 9 o'clock we landed, and went directly to the Victoria Hotel.

CHAPTER III.

Y own impression is, that we had, one and all, a somewhat dilapidated look when we stepped on shore; and I confess likewise that when our worldly goods were paraded, their diminutive appearance quite astonished and somewhat distressed me. We had undoubtedly determined to reduce our baggage to as small a compass as possible. It consisted of a small box for each of us, suited to fit the carrieole, or carriage of the country; likewise to each a fat carpet-bag was allotted, a waterproof wrapper, containing warm rugs and spare cloaks, a

large-sized fishing bag, a square hand-bag, an umbrella worthy of Mrs. Gamp. Seldom have three unprotected females, bent upon pleasure, landed on a foreign shore with a more moderate supply of worldly goods. I had forgotten to mention that we had engaged a courier, and picked him up at Christiansand. Carlsen was his name, and he proved himself, during the whole of our residence in Norway, an invaluable and faithful servant.

Consul-General Crowe and his son, the Acting Vice-Consul, called soon after our arrival, and, with great kindness and courtesy, put us in the way of arranging our projected tour through the country. It had been our intention originally to disembark at Christiansand, and take the coasting steamer to Bergen, Molde, and

Veblungsnaes; but Teresina's proceedings on the voyage, to say nothing of my own, and the unsettled state of the weather, made my mother determine to change our plans, and make our tour entirely by land.

In the evening, at six o'clock, the Vice-Consul drove us to the Consulate, and from the balcony we saw the real beauty of the Fjord, in the rich tints of a Norwegian evening, as the sun went down amidst the most glowing colours,—it seemed so extraordinary to us that the sun should not set till past ten o'clock. On the morning of the 31st, we were exceedingly busy inspecting carriages, and buying a small stock of provisions, consisting of portable soup, tongues, biscuits, and tea. In the afternoon Miss Crowe drove us to the King's Shooting Box

(Oscar's Hall), and we finished the day most delightfully at their residence at Monkedammen.

It was on this occasion that we made our first experimental drive in a carriage. Puzzled, indeed, we were how to get in, and very much troubled how to get out again. I had a drive first, with the Vice-Consul seated behind ; my mother also took her first lesson. We returned to the hotel fully instructed, we believed, in carriage driving, and confident in the future. To-morrow our real journey commences ; to-morrow we leave behind so-called civilisation, fashion, bonnets, and smart dresses, in the firm belief that little boxes and large carpet-bags are all that is required in our proposed wanderings. We sup for the last time under the auspices of a waiter dressed in truly

civilised British garments; we sleep in beds the like of which may not gladden our eyes for days and days to come; and the next morning the railroad carries off us three adventurous females, courier, carriages, &c. A loud hurrah salutes us as we glide out of the station; but whether in compliment to our nation, or to our unprotected state, I have never been able to learn. The day was intensely hot, the speed of the train about equal to that of a moderate pair of post-chaises carrying a Sunday party to dine at Richmond. The carriages were excellent, and the travellers' comforts were well considered. There were ample supplies of iced water in each carriage, and silver cups to drink out of. The scenery was very pretty along the line, and at every station baskets of fresh wild strawberries

were offered us by the children. We are so used in England to rough treatment at railway stations, that the comfort and attention here surprised us. In England we do battle at a station for seats, the safety of our luggage depends on a fee to the porter, we are tumbled out at the end of the journey like bales of goods, and, but for bribery, our luggage would never be regained.

We reached Eidswoldbakken about three o'clock, and embarked on board a comfortable steamer. Our carriages, cart, &c., were all brought safely on board. Dinner was shortly announced : it was plain and good—lake trout boiled, with potatoes and melted butter ; the latter simply butter melted, unmixed with any other ingredient ; roasted mutton ; after this, wild strawberries in gigantic bowls ;

and huge jugs of cream with powdered sugar, and soup-plates to eat them in. Coffee was served on deck, where we remained admiring the beauty of the Mjösen Lake, which, though not grand in scenery, reminded us in some respects of the Killarney Lakes. The Mjösen Lake seldom freezes until the winter is far advanced. This immunity or peculiarity has always been attributed to its great depth; but no one had ever thought it of sufficient interest to ascertain this by instituting a series of soundings until last year, when the Directors of the railway, who have four steamers running on the lake in connection with the Trunk Railway, commenced a regular series of soundings from the southern outlet, and have already reached a depth of 248 fathoms, which probably is not the great-

est depth, as they have not yet reached the centre or broadest part of the lake. The Mjösen Lake is 400 feet above the level of the sea. It will thus appear that the bottom of this lake is about 800 feet below *the bottom* of the North Sea! Whether this profound fissure is the result of volcanic or glacial action is a question for scientific geologists to decide.

We landed at Lillehammer about ten P.M., and as we had supped on board, we were not very long in settling ourselves for the night.

Thus far it was very difficult to realise the fact that we were in northern climes. The temperature hitherto has been all we could desire; our proceedings and doings and dangers have been of the mildest description. And so I lay down my pen, and conclude our first

day's adventures, contented in the remembrances of a pleasant day, passed amidst new scenes of every description, all of which have afforded us great amusement and gratification.

CHAPTER IV.

I AM sure, if I live to be ever so old, I shall never forget the start from Lillehammer in our carriages. Unused to the task, we hardly knew where things should be stowed, and especially the extras. We soon discovered that the carriages had been sent on without nets. As we had a luggage cart, this was of less consequence to us, but most important for all travellers who move without that addition. At last fishing-rods were slung, and such like tackle—sketch-books and Heaven knows what besides were stowed away in the large india-rubber bags—the little boxes were placed behind the carriages, forming a

seat for a small boy sent in charge of the horses. Breakfast was eaten, the day lovely, and we ready for starting on our adventures. Suddenly the ostler declared that one horse could never draw the cart with the fat carpet-bags. He and the courier immediately engaged in a very animated conversation; we were firm, feeling that if cheated at the beginning of our journey the practice would be continued, and we should be victimised all the way; but at last we were permitted to drive off in peace.

I am firmly convinced that if we could have driven through Hyde Park in our carriages, the sensation created would have far exceeded the effect of all the four-horse drags that London could produce. My carriage was to lead the way, my mother's to come next, and Teresina

to follow, the cart bringing up the rear. We started : my progress was all that could be desired, and after a while I looked back, but not a sign of the coming party could be seen. In fact, Teresina had never driven before, and evidently her notion of driving had more of progress than prudence, with limited notions of the perils of obstruction. The result was, that, applying her whip and neglecting the reins, she ran into my mother's carriage, and a serious smash was nearly the consequence. However, all was soon righted; the accident taught Teresina a lesson not easily forgotten; and, I am bound to add, she soon became a most experienced Jehu. I feel sure that all who have travelled in this manner will agree with me in thinking that there is nothing so charming as

travelling by carriage in fine weather, especially for the first time, when there is a novelty about it quite delightful. Everything seemed so new; and it gave one more the idea of riding through the country in an arm-chair than anything else; and the mild excitement of driving oneself takes away from any feeling of idleness. Those who have a gushing turn of mind and delight in exclamations can only express them to the boy behind, who, as a rule, avoids conversation, and most probably would not understand a word you said. Perhaps the necessity for silence is a real advantage. Nothing could be more beautiful than the scenery and waterfalls. The roads were good, and the little horses trotted along in a most satisfactory manner.

The first stage of about ten English

miles being accomplished safely, we had to learn how to jump from our carriages—no easy matter at first. We found fresh horses, and proceeded, believing in our innocence that such would continue to be the case; but, at the next station, travellers who had preceded us had carried off all the horses. We had now to thank the Consul-General for his advice and care of us. For though the station afforded ample provision of goats' milk, cheese, raw salt meat, butter, cream, and sour bread, suited for Norwegians, our early dinner would have been a bad one, but for his advice. The white bread brought from Lillehammer, and the dressed tongue, and English cheese, enabled us to dine most comfortably.

At the next station the Fates were against us—no horses and a long halt.

Here we were thankful for the wild strawberries and cream offered to us. We reached Listad late, having come nearly fifty English miles. The provisions at this station, except dairy produce, were exhausted, and our Liebig soup was very acceptable, and ready in ten minutes. This first day taught us never to move in Norway without some provision in the carriage. Although it was eleven o'clock when we reached Listad, it was still daylight, and the evening pleasantly cool after the heat of the day. We were up, dressed, breakfasted, and off by half-past six next morning. So much has been written of all the scenes we are passing through, that it is difficult to give any description without appearing to repeat the words of others. The absence of any means or power to converse enabled

us more fully to gather in all the various scenes that came under our observation. The cloudless sky, the extraordinary green colour of the river Logen, which flows through the valley of Gudbrandsdal, the cottages, the cultivation, the hay-making—all was new to us, and singularly interesting. The heat this day (the 3rd) was so great that the horses when taken from the carriages went and lay down in the shade, without attempting to eat.

Fifty miles a day is quite enough for ladies who travel for pleasure, and who enjoy stopping an hour in the middle of the day for the purpose of refreshment. Such was my reflection when we arrived at Toftemoen, having been detained, as usual, from not having ordered horses beforehand. During the day Teresina

had again come to grief, some peril, and great fear; for, after our luncheon at Laurgaard, her horse became unmanageable, and bolted. I prudently allowed her to pass, and the brute ran about a mile before she stopped him; but when we came up we found her, though somewhat frightened, safe and sound. The courier followed us with another horse; and thus our day was safely brought to a close without any casualty.

CHAPTER V.

HE 4th (Sunday), we rested at Toftemöen, and were thankful to be quiet after our two days' journey. Our hotel was clean and comfortable. We wandered about charmed with the country. A profusion of wild flowers perfumed the air, and made the fields look like a garden. Strawberries and large sweet roses in every direction. The cows beautiful little creatures, the pigs unique in their ugliness, and the sheep small, like those in the Isle of Man.

We made a pilgrimage up a mountain to see the abode of the descendant of the old Kings of Norway, and to pay our

respects to him. The family retain something of their former state, inasmuch as, like all royal personages, they only marry amongst themselves ; and, supposing only one cousin is available, the lady not selected is compelled to remain in single blessedness for life. It was a curious sight, in these very changeable times, to find this old man despising the world, and living happily in a circle of his own, made out of the relics of a departed greatness. His farm-house was a perfect collection of curiosities. He showed us his crowns, one of iron, and one gilt ; introduced us to a young Princess, his daughter ; treated us to sherry ; and we then departed down the mountain, and returned to our inn.

On the morning of the 5th, after some delay caused by a small fight between

the cook and the courier, respecting some cold meat which we desired to carry off, rather than lose time, I insisted on starting minus the cold meat. Passing Dombaas, where the road to the Romsdal branches off to the left from the Thronthjem road, we made our breakfast at Holaker. Between Dombaas and Holaker the road keeps for a time by the bank of the river Logen, which then loses itself in a lake of about seven miles long. Slept at Stueflaaten in the Romsdal—the scenery bold and beautiful; but what struck us most was the perfect repose, and the absence of population, indeed we often travelled whole days without meeting a living being.

On the 6th we started rather late; we drove down the Romsdal road, which is very fine; a great portion of the valley

consists of precipitous grey rocks, ending in points apparently as sharp as needles. Not a blade of grass was to be seen, and the whole effect reminded one forcibly of the illustrations in the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' when Christian comes to the Valley of Despair. We passed through this portion of the valley, and then emerged into the lightest, the sunniest, and the most lovely little spot that can be imagined in the Valley of Romsdal. It was sheltered from every wind by the snow-capped mountains that surrounded it, while a most tempting-looking river ran through the dale. The name of this charming spot was Aak.

Dear Aak! when I think of all the happy days I spent in that valley, fain would I wish myself back again in the snug little wooden inn, so nice, so clean,

so comfortable! So contented were we in the simplicity of our lives! so tranquil! so free from care! When again shall I ever enjoy such happy hours as those passed on the banks of its sunny river? We found no fault because it was a ladder, and not a staircase, that led to our bedrooms; our requirements were simple, and all seemed *couleur de rose*. Since then we have seen higher mountains, and what is said to be finer scenery; but Aak will always be to me the pearl of Norway, and the gem of my imagination. No description can do it justice. It must be an unhappy mind that could not find new life and happiness in such a spot, on which nature had showered her comforts and blessings in the richest abundance.

When we arrived at Aak our provisions

had run short. On the road we had been able to get nothing but fish and eggs; but here everything good or necessary was forthcoming. Salmon, wild birds, fresh meat, fowls, and even reindeer occasionally decked our dinner table. With such resources at our command, we had little cause to complain.

It has been said or written, though where I do not remember, that the life is most happy of which there is nothing to relate; and when I arrive at this portion of my journal I hesitate, and ask myself, shall I dare to write on, and endeavour to describe the happiest weeks that my life has hitherto known? There may be some cynical people who may doubt whether the life I attempt to describe is one that I or they could really enjoy; but it is most true, that the

happiness of my mother and myself was perfect, and unbroken by a single vexation. Perhaps it may be as well to describe our quarters in this tiny hotel. We were fortunate in finding the older portion of the hotel vacant; and by turning a ground-floor bedroom into a sitting-room, and securing three bedrooms, not bigger than cabins, and reached by a sort of ladder, we were able to settle ourselves comfortably. The obliging daughters of the house continually decorated our rooms and windows with endless supplies of beautiful flowers. Our courier continued to be most useful and attentive; and we settled quietly down to our new residence, ways, and habits.

CHAPTER VI.

HE life we led at Aak was so even and regular, that when I read over my notes I find a sameness difficult to deal with. Fine weather, early rising, walking, sketching, fishing—all this is recorded day by day with trifling variation.

The morning of the 7th was charming. We were up betimes, eager to see Aak in all the beauty of the early morning. And well did it repay us! No vain regrets were felt at having left our beds, comfortable though they were; and our descent down the ladder, with the courier's aid, was accomplished with safety and propriety. My mother's

anxiety for my downward progress was duly attended to. Her Grace followed with ease and the composure which ensures success—whilst, alas! Teresina, fearless of consequences, came down with a rapidity worthy of a lamplighter, and a carelessness of appearances only justified by the beauty of her boots. We wandered by the side of the pretty river till it was time to return to breakfast. Fruits, fish, and fowl, the produce of the valley, supplemented by tea purchased at Christiania, furnished a meal which was all we could desire. The day was very hot, and we thought it wise to rest; still we were not idle, indeed, during the whole of our residence in Norway, never do I remember a wearisome moment. So we occupied ourselves in making sketches of our

carriages ; I confess, also, to making one of our courier, which, however, I did not show him. Teresina, who occasionally flirted with him when there was no one else available, said it did not do him justice ; but how are the features to be brought out when the face is a mass of hair ?

In the evening I was to make my first attempt at salmon fishing. Fashion, which has not hitherto invaded this happy valley, as far as the people are concerned, appears, however, to have dipped into the river and streams. Thus the salmon here, like society in London, dines late, and no fly, however lovely, tempts him to rise before seven in the evening. No sportsman ever longed more keenly for the first of September than I did for the hours when

I should make an attempt to drop a fly upon the waters. About seven o'clock we went down to the place where boat and boatmen were appointed to meet us. The river reminds one in many respects of those in Scotland, and the stream varies from day to day, the result of storms in the mountains. On this occasion it was all we could wish, and we launched out into the middle of the river. The boatman paddled the boat gently from side to side, and up and down, to the most likely spots, whilst I began for the first time to throw my fly. It is an art not acquired in a moment, and occasionally requires a little exertion; but by degrees I kept my fly more and more correctly fluttering on the water. Patience, especially in fishing, is an important point; mine on this occa-

sion was worthy of all praise. My mother watched with equal patience and great anxiety, and she generally believed I had hooked a fish whenever my want of skill had caused the fly to be drowned in the rapid stream. Long it was before I was rewarded; but at length what seemed the happiest moment in my life arrived. I hooked and landed, or I should say secured, a trout that weighed 3 lbs. How proud I was! and when I returned late to our hotel I took every care that my skill should be known, and the evidence placed beyond doubt by the display of my fish. As days passed on I became more skilled, and considerable success rewarded my efforts. In reading over my notes I find such memoranda as the following :—7th, killed a 7lb. salmon; 10th, two salmon of 8lb. and

7lb. ; 12th, three salmon ; 13th, a trout, 14lb. ; and so on ; till I left Aak, in fact, fish of all sizes and sorts I brought in triumph to the hotel.

Occasionally we ordered our carriages and drove to the different villages. I spent the day in sketching, Teresina and the courier coming later with our dinner and tea. In some of these spots the views of the Romsdal range were seen to great advantage.

On the 1st of September we went to Naes, and turning up the north bank of the Fjord to its termination, crossed the river, and rested where we could see the other side of the Romsdal mountain, but the view here is not equal to that we have been daily looking at. The crops at this period were fast ripening, and appeared most abundant. On the

8th we drove to Veblungsnaesset, and after waiting two hours got the water post-boat and six men to row us and our carriages across the Fjörd to the Molde road. The stations on this road are very slow, which means that instead of post-horses being kept, the peasants are obliged, however inconvenient it may be to them, to bring their ponies from their work in the fields for the use of travellers. It is a heavy tax, causes great delay, and the price fixed by law is insufficient to remunerate them for the loss and inconvenience.

The portion of the Molde road on which we travelled is lovely, but not grand. Our return back was tedious, owing to the wind and rough state of the road; but we were assured, if we returned here another season, we should

find that great improvements had been made in the interim.

Thus our days passed rapidly and pleasantly away. On the evenings I did not fish it was my great delight to wander to a spot singularly beautiful, where, looking in a westerly direction, one could gather, as it were, into a single glance the whole panorama of the valley. How often, resting on that little shady platform, have I watched, amidst a silence so profound that it was difficult to realise the existence of any other living creature, the glories of the slowly departing day! Hours, I may truly say, seemed to pass away almost as minutes, whilst the mind, tranquil in its happiness, was nevertheless fully occupied in thoughts of past happy days, and remembrances of loved and valued friends.

It was a grand sight to look into the glorious sunset, and watch the mountains as they became gradually tinged with a lovely hue of pink. It was at such moments that one fully appreciated the enjoyment and the perfection of our contented lives. How truly one could say to those who are vexed by worldly cares, Come here; let those who have suffered sorrow and disappointment, wander for a while in this lovely valley! If the past cannot be forgotten, such scenes will at least tend to soothe the mind, and lead it to a state of tranquillity and peace, to which it has hitherto been a stranger.

Occasionally little incidents disturbed, or varied the even tenour of our life. One evening a thunder-storm suddenly burst upon us. How grand it was! In England we should have called it awful;

but here, I know not why, as we watched the flashes, and heard the reverberation of the thunder through the hills, it seemed to us more a matter of interest than a source of fear; and then, how rapidly it passed, and again all was tranquil!

Amongst the various people who came and went, there one day arrived a newly married French couple, both 'tirés à quatre épingles pour la chasse.' The lady wore a short Benoiton green dress, trimmed with silver, and carried a little gun and a horn. They went out fishing with a float and a gorgeous fly to match the dress. Need I add, they caught no fish? Next day, duly prepared, off they went deer-stalking in the bushes near the inn. The horn resounded in the wood, but the little gun was silent, and

the reindeer, if any were there, which is not probable, fled, and were seen no more ; so indeed it also happened to our French friends themselves, who departed, saying, there was no spòrt in Norway, and they should return to Paris. Let us hope they reached it in safety—she as happy as a bride should be on her return to her home ; and let us likewise hope that the chasse in France made up for the disappointment Norway had inflicted.

One day, as we watched from the inn door peasants working in the extreme heat in the hay-fields, and wondered how in four months such splendid crops could be so rapidly perfected, our attention was attracted by an eagle pouncing down on a very young lamb, with the intention of carrying it off. Fortunately he was seen, and shot in the act—not, however,

killed, but severely wounded. A crowd gathered round the poor thing; but it was a most remarkable fact that the only person the eagle appeared to notice was the man by whose hand he had fallen. He seemed to know from whence his death-blow came, and wherever the man moved the bird turned his head, and followed him with his eyes so long as life remained in him.

We went many pleasant expeditions to the mountains, and visited the Sæters, where the cows and herds are kept, and also some of the farm-houses. Although earning next to nothing, the people seem comfortably off, and are remarkably well fed in these districts. They have coffee, brown biscuit, salt butter, dried fish, dried meat uncooked (which the people prefer), and sour milk. Two hours are devoted

to sleep after dinner—a very necessary provision, considering the unwholesome diet. The middle of September stole upon us unawares. Occasionally a line from some kind friend proved to us that at least we were not quite forgotten. A stray ‘Times,’ thanks to the kindness of the Consul-General, enabled us to know that England still remained, and taught us how the world went on.

The weather began slightly to change. That little cold shiver of wind amongst the trees and the whirl of a few decayed leaves told us that the glories of a Norway summer were beginning to fade. The mountain tops were powdered with snow, waterfalls were dried up, not a fish would bite; so after trying all the different flies in their turn, spinning a minnow, and even condescending to a worm, we

gave up angling in despair. I accepted our landlord's offer of having a large pool dragged before we left the Romsdal. It was an exciting scene. Some of the fish got away as the net broke ; but we landed sixteen large salmon, and an enormous trout that weighed twenty pounds. It was the most unpleasant-looking fish I ever saw. After all was finished, the men took the fish by the gills, one in each hand, and dragged them along the road in procession, the peasant with the large trout leading the way, and looking as important as a Lord Chamberlain.

CHAPTER VII.

HE time had now arrived when, if we carried out our plans, we must leave the Romsdal; and so, on the 12th of September, we made preparations for our departure on the following day. Sorry I was to leave Aak; but the weather was changing, the summer passing away. And so we gathered together our luggage; boxes and bags were packed and reduced to order, bills paid, my favourite spot revisited, kind words exchanged with our numerous friends in this happy valley; once more, and for the last time, we climbed the ladder that led to our little cabins; and on the following morning (the 13th), at

six A.M., we bid farewell to Aak. Like practised travellers, no dangers or difficulties interfered with our start. Each charioteer sprang into her carriage, gathered up the reins, and, amidst the friendly greetings of its people, we bade an affectionate farewell to Romsdal and the hotel at Aak.

We trotted off in due form. I led the way; Teresina was requested to keep an even distance, as occasionally she showed a Jehu-like tendency, which was, to say the least, trying to our nerves. Vebungsnaesset was reached in sufficiently good time to enable us to catch the steamer. Our carriages were taken to pieces before being put on board. We reached Molde at three P.M.; the hotel dear, and by no means comfortable.

I never saw such an extended pano-

rama of hills as is seen from the hotel at Molde. Our accommodation proved a sad falling off from the comforts of Aak. True we had a staircase; but it led to wretched rooms. In the afternoon there was a thunder-storm, which nobody seemed to notice; whilst the town, later in the day, was thrown into a state of immense excitement by one of the fishing boats returning with an enormous flat fish, which weighed ninety-eight pounds. It was cut up and sold by auction in small pieces. Our landlord invested in some lots, and it turned out most excellent.

On the 15th we went to the Lutheran church. The minister's dress was black, and he wore a large Elizabethan ruff round his neck. The service was very different from ours: the minister seemed

to be perpetually on the move, whilst the congregation sang psalms. The sermon, doubtless, was impressive, if one might judge from the flow of tears, both from the young and the old. Doubtless we acted most properly in going to church;—we demonstrated the excellence of our intentions; but, inasmuch as we did not understand a single word, it is open to consideration and debate whether we might not have just as well remained at home. However, we did, as far as was possible, the right thing.

The churchyards were more than commonly interesting, as, on each Saturday, friends and relations decorate with flowers the graves of those they loved. Little flat tins, in the form of crosses made to hold water, are used by many, and the flowers remain fresh during the whole week.

From Molde we went by steamer to Aalesund. Weather indifferent. After a wet cheerless voyage, we landed after dark, and got shelter, clean beds, and supper at a merchant's house.

On the 17th the weather was very variable, and, indeed, during the rest of the journey till we reached the snowy range, we were continually troubled, more or less, with damp and rain.

Such weather is a warning to tourists to cease travelling before the end of September. At Aahjem we found, to our disgust, that the little inn, which was only meant to take in five or six travellers, was already giving accommodation to fourteen gentlemen, and as none of them were weak enough to turn out of their quarters at ten o'clock at night, we were obliged to send and ask the minister

if he would take us in. Having received a favourable answer, we walked by moonlight to his house. All our wardrobe was contained in a small portmanteau carried by a sailor. At the door we were received by the whole family, and ushered by them into the best parlour, where they all stood round looking at us, saying all kinds of civil and polite things in Norsk. As their civil words were, of course, not the same as our civil words, we had recourse to the family dictionary to understand each other. At the end of half an hour we were all very much exhausted by the effort to be pleasant under difficulties, and the young lady of the house, taking a large pair of silver candlesticks, one in each hand, said she would show us the guest-chamber. The whole scene reminded us of the

Corsican Brothers, fortunately, however, with no ghost to spoil my enjoyment of my comfortable and well-appointed room. Next day all the family were up to see us off at half-past five o'clock, and gave us each a lovely bouquet of flowers as we drove away.

We were off by six, over the mountains, having to drive our carriages at least a three hours' trip to catch the steamer on the Nordfjord at Bryggen. The drive was beautiful. Two hours' ascent and an hour's descent brought us to our destination. We slept on board, off Flore; the accommodation and attendance not to be surpassed.

The 19th was cold and stormy, but clear. From Aahjem to Bergen the navigation of the Fjords is wonderful. You go in a large steamer, among giant

rocks, in and out, as some one remarked, 'like a dog at a fair.' Sometimes passing through such narrow passages that you could almost touch the precipitous rocks on each side, and often, till close upon it, you appear to be steaming into the solid granite. Of course, among the inner lakes, it is always as smooth as glass; but should it be blowing a gale, woe betide the sufferers from sickness, when the cross chop from the sea catches the vessel.

CHAPTER VIII.



WE reached Bergen about six P.M., and went to the Scandinavian Hotel, which is comfortable. It had been our original intention to reach Bergen at an earlier period, for the purpose of sea-bathing; but having been advised that it was somewhat too late in the season, we altered our plan, and remained longer in the Romsdal. Bergen is interesting to the traveller. Its harbour is excellent, the chief trade fish of all sorts and kinds, and at certain periods the amount of shipping in its harbour very great. There are museums, picture galleries, &c., all of which are well described in 'Murray's Handbook.'

On the 20th we drove about the town, and inspected the shops. Any amateur with a taste for old plate, and a long purse, must imagine himself in the seventh heaven when he finds himself in Bergen. Every other shop is crammed with old silver things, of every conceivable size and shape—many of them so strange that what their original use could be, no one could guess. Scandal whispers that some of the endless silver tankards are not really old, but got up for the British tourist, who is as unsuspecting here as in other climes. You should have your own fishing scales, and weigh the plate yourself; and then, if you are clever, pay a dollar or six marks for two lods, which is at the rate of 4s. 6d. for a little over an English ounce, and nothing for the workmanship, unless

it is something very much out of the common. The native peasant jewellery is also very pretty, and curiously like that of the 'Contadine' of Rome, with the exception of the crowns for the brides; the said crown is like what a king wears in a pantomime, and each well-to-do peasant has one in his family, which is worn by his daughters and relations on their wedding day. On the 21st a deluge of rain; we were unable to go to the fish market as we had intended to do. It is one of the most interesting sights in Bergen.

On Sunday, the 22nd, we attended the Norwegian church, which we thought extremely unimpressive, having neither the simplicity of the Lutheran church, nor the grandeur of our Romish rival. The churches are decorated like the

Roman Catholic churches. The minister's more gaudy vestments being laid on the altar, these are only occasionally worn ; the prayers are nearly all extemporary, and the chief feature in the service, as in the Scotch, seems to be the very long sermon with which it ends.

In the afternoon we went to the Lutheran church, and saw a wedding before the evening service. The couple were quite young, and came into the church together unattended, the friends and near relations having already taken their places in pews on either side of the altar, the men on one side, the women on the other. Never did bridegroom look more proud or happy, as he placed his bride in one of the chairs provided for them facing the altar, on a carpet strewn with flowers. A very long ex-

hortation began, and to us it appeared as if the minister was reproofing the young man; but he was in truth entreating him to be kind to the fair being at his side. The youth at this early state of married life could not even bear the idea of his possible harshness to his better half, so he began to sob and cry. The bride, who really had no intention of crying, thought it wise to join him in a few tears. Poor creatures! they retired far less cheerfully than they entered the church.

I may here remark that whilst we remained in Bergen, we were told that all along this coast there is a firm belief in the existence of the sea serpent, which is invariably described, in the orthodox manner, as a mile long, with a head like an eel, and a tail finishing in a tuft. All

the northern seaports abound with records of ships' companies having seen the creature.

The following passages from the Bible go some way to justify them in this belief :—

Isaiah xxvii. 1.—In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea.

Psalms lxxiv. 13, 14.—Thou didst divide the sea by thy strength: thou breakest the heads of the dragons in the waters. Thou breakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness.

Psalms civ. 24–26.—O Lord, how

manifold are thy works ! in wisdom hast thou made them all : the earth is full of thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships : there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein.

The fishermen on the coast likewise believe that, when they are in danger of shipwreck, the voices of the drowned are heard at dusk calling them to come and join them ; and there are cases in which the impression is so strong that they have jumped overboard, influenced by this belief. All things considered—which means in spite of the weather, which was rather variable, and checked our proceedings—our stay in Bergen was on the

whole both interesting and agreeable ; but I am satisfied that our sojourn in the Romsdal was a life far more agreeable than if we had followed our first intentions, and come here earlier for the purpose of sea bathing.

CHAPTER IX.

N the 24th, at three A.M., our courier knocked at my door, and urged me to rise without delay, assuring me that it was the 'beautifullest morning,' and that the steamer for the Hardanger Fjord would start at five A.M. Dark as it was, I trusted to his wisdom, and, alas! on starting at a quarter to five, found small rain falling. Hoping it might prove only a morning mist, we put on waterproofs, and, with rugs and umbrellas, watched for the fine weather promised us; but storms of cold rain followed each other, in the intervals between which we could see the lovely coast scenery. Till towards the after-

noon we entered the Hardanger Fjord, when the sun broke out, and lighted up the whole Valley of the Rosendal.

It is impossible to over-estimate the beauty and magnificence of the scenery in the Hardanger Fjord. As we travelled up this most lovely lake, the scene changed rapidly from tracts of sterile rock, where there are no roads, to the richest vegetation, reminding one of a moving panorama. Little green spots here and there denoted sheltered places or farms, where magnificent crops are grown. We did not reach Eide till ten o'clock at night, and it was eleven before we obtained shelter in Jansen's house, a mile off, having to wade through a sea of mud to reach it.

One of these isolated little farms was the scene of a curious murder, not many

years ago. I learnt the history of it, and as it ends with the best of morals, I have, with some trouble, translated it, and give it to the reader.

Not long ago there lived a farmer, a particularly respectable man, who always took his Saturday trip in the steamer, in order to attend Sunday church. He was a millionaire, too, for this part of the country; and when one fine day his wife presented him with a son and heir, all his neighbours were delighted. Baby shortly died, and the wife sickened also. Every one admired the kind manner in which the husband tended the partner of his life. She, nevertheless, got worse and worse, and at last had to keep her bed. He administered some milk, and desired her to remain quiet while he went away to fetch the doctor. As soon

as he was gone, the poor woman called one of the two old pensioners who sat in the chimney corner, and confided to her that she knew she was going to die, and that she had been poisoned by her husband. She sent him her forgiveness if ever it was found out, and swore the old woman to secrecy. When the farmer returned with the doctor, he had to deplore the death of his wife. Shortly after he married again a lovely girl ; and it was the hope of winning her that had tempted him to commit the crime. In time two boys were born to him, and everything prospered with him. The two old pensioners meanwhile had been moved out of the farm-house, and the woman had kept her promise of secrecy, nor had she told her husband. One day the farmer called at their cottage-door with a pre-

sent of eggs and milk. He made the old man drink some of the milk to his health, and promise to give the remainder to his wife on her return home. When the wife did come home, however, she found him nearly dying ; and, suspecting foul play, dragged him into the field where the cow was, and milked fresh milk into his mouth. It made him sick, and thus saved his life. Here was evident proof that the farmer was uneasy in his mind, and doubtful of the faith of the old pensioner.

Years after, it happened that he was present at the wedding of a neighbour's daughter. Everything was still prospering with him, but he had determined to start for America in two days. After supper a tipsy labourer gave him a push ; he returned it roughly, on which the

man, who could still speak, retorted, 'Bless me! are you going to murder me now?' The home thrust was unwittingly given. The farmer's rage knew no bounds, and he left the house swearing he would not stay to be insulted, and that he had not murdered his wife.

'Qui s'excuse, s'accuse!' and he was put under arrest, the bodies were exhumed, and both proved to have been poisoned with arsenic. He was taken to Christiania to be tried, but his crime could not be proved; and he lived afterwards a retired life on a solitary farm, with a minister. One day, when very ill, he sent for the minister, and told him that, before death came, he wished to confess his crimes. Witnesses were called, and he made a statement in writing that he had poisoned his child

and wife, and had also attempted the death of the two old pensioners. As soon as he had made his confession he improved in health, recovered, and was taken to Christiania to be tried, and was sentenced to be executed. The King of Norway happened to be staying there, and, for the sake of the wife and children, wished to mitigate the sentence. His Ministers said 'No;' and the farmer's head was cut off with a sword at the first blow by the town executioner, who, by the law of the land, has to take the place of the condemned, if, at the second blow, the head does not roll off. A pension was granted by the King to the wife, who went to America with her boys; and so ends this true story, which I have translated, as nearly as possible, word for word.

On the 25th the day was fine. The sun seemed to warm us again, after all the damp of the last few days. We went, accompanied by Teresina and our dinner, up a mountain, and did not return to our inn till late. In fact, it was a rest day.

On the 27th we steamed off at five A.M. It poured with rain, and only cleared for an hour, when we saw Odde to perfection. The snow of the Folge Fond crowned the heights, whilst trees, laden with fruit, covered the base. The green glacier showed its ice in brilliant contrast to the snow. We reached Eide after dark in a regular downpour. On the 28th and 29th the rain was incessant, and, although anxious to push on, we hesitated to do so. The courier then informed me that the landlady was tired of us, and said it would not clear up for

weeks, and we must leave. We refused, unless the weather changed, and this it fortunately did before one P.M., and gladly we drove away. The national costume is here worn by all, and is both comfortable and becoming. Dark-blue cloth trimmed with red, the bodice laced with a silver chain to a button of silver, and a cloth body over. In cold weather a dark-blue cloth cap with red border—red in the plaited hair. The men wear dark-blue cloth with red tie, and silver buttons to jacket and waistcoat. The ascent to Vossevangen is very pretty, and the little village when reached charming. Our hotel stood just out of the village, facing the lake, and very comfortable, completely sheltered from the winds by the snow mountains. The fishing before the hotel is free, and the lake, some half a mile

broad, stretches miles up the valley, and has a most dreamy and romantic appearance ;—at least, I thought so, although under the influence of a bad cold, which, as a rule, does not inspire cheerfulness, nor at all assist the imagination.

We saw a fine old silver tankard in the hotel, but not for sale. The landlord told me these tankards are no longer useful as they were in his youth, his countrymen having become too proud to drink out of one jug, each man now requiring his own glass.

CHAPTER X.

N the 30th we rested, and on the 1st October we started for Gudvangen, the road increasing in beauty. From Stalheim the view down to Nareodal was very fine; the mountains were powdered with snow, which added to the effect. The weather favoured us till we reached the bottom of the winding road which conducted us somewhat abruptly to the valley below. The descent is fine, with waterfalls of considerable size meeting you at each turn in the road. A mist setting in spoilt the conclusion of our sightseeing, and we were glad to reach Gudvangen, which can barely be called a village, but boasts a

fair inn, which has three 'guest-rooms, and is kept by clean and civil people. The 2nd was a perfect deluge of rain. The 3rd was finer, and we drove up to Stalheim, and had our luncheon in a wood some miles off. During our September journey we hardly met a creature; neither the elegant tourist nor the inevitable commercial traveller disturbed us. We had the inn to ourselves. The summer servants were dismissed, the families wait on themselves, and when we asked our host for some dinner, he generally proposed to kill a sheep. The innkeepers, instead of wishing to keep us, were too thankful to pass us on to the next station. On the 4th, a glorious sun, with cold clear air. At nine A.M. we were told that the small mail steamer was in, and would convey us to Laerdal-

sören, starting at nine at night. As by this plan we should have missed seeing some of the finest scenery in Norway, we agreed with the captain to take us out for a few hours by daylight at a moderate sum per hour. We soon embarked, and were more than delighted with the grandeur of the Fjord. The mountains rise 5,000 feet perpendicularly on each side. We were on board between four and five hours, and also steamed up the Aurlands Fjord, which, although less severe in character, is equally to be admired. We returned to our inn for dinner. The captain and a boy were all the crew that remained on the deck of this little steamer, and I felt rather proud on my return at having been allowed to steer the ship whilst the captain stoked his engines, and the crew took rest and

refreshment. The mackerel we had seen caught on our outward trip proved most excellent. At nine P.M. we went on board, and waited nearly two hours for the arrival of the post, which had been delayed some hours by tempestuous weather near Bergen, to which place it is conveyed by boat. The night was so clear and fine, that had it not been for the cold, we should have greatly enjoyed ourselves, but we had at length to retire into the cabin, and were not sorry when we reached the landing for Laerdalsören about two A.M. next morning. We had ordered horses, and soon were off in our carriages, the ponies taking us at a great pace along a narrow up-and-down road on the banks of the Fjord, every part of which in the uncertain light looked formidable. Never was hot sherry and

water more needed, or more gratefully received, nor were travellers ever more pleased to rest, the long day and keen air having proved very fatiguing.

5th.—Having made our last steam trip for 1867, I must, before seeing our little vessel leave, record, with respect to this mode of travelling, that in all cases we have received the greatest attention from the captains and all those under them.

To the inhabitants on this secluded coast these steamers are their coaches ; the fjords their roads. There is a constant succession of passengers and change of cargo ; but it is remarkable that amidst all the turmoil caused by change of cargo and passengers, one never hears a single angry word. Politeness and good humour are never laid aside. Every one of the poorer class carries his own provisions

for the voyage, bread, butter, and cheese ; beer is seldom seen, and spirits never.

Walked in the morning, and sea-fished in the afternoon—a hard frost. The excitement of fishing kept us warm. The peasants' caps are different here, and the women wear a head-dress, in white, like a huge butterfly.

6th.—We started early on the ascent of the Fille Fjeld, the sky cloudless, the cold very severe. Our thermometer marked 14 degrees of frost. The roads were like iron, the little horses ran along as fast as their legs could carry them. The scene was lovely in the extreme, everything in the shape of a cascade being frozen ; while the Laerdal river even sometimes dashed under arches of ice, and the rocks were everywhere clothed with icicles many yards in length.

- " The previous week snow had come down nearly to the base of the mountain, but
- had melted with the late rains.

On arriving at the old church of Borgen, we left our tarrioles to inspect this wonder of ancient woodwork. There is only one other building of the same sort remaining in Norway. It was built in the eleventh century; the external details are fine as a Chinese pagoda; the wood has been preserved by tar; the wooden belfry is less ancient, and stands close by. The church accommodation is now insufficient, and a new building is rising up by its side. After the station at Hæg, we came to snow on the road, and had reason to lament the northman's love for his horse. The day, as I before said, was bitterly cold, but he would not allow us to travel above a foot's pace,

and, shivering with cold, we did not reach Maristuen till six P.M. The ground here was quite covered with snow. Fortunately, we were in time to take possession of the whole hotel, which consisted of a small sitting-room with three beds. The cold was so severe that the water turned to ice in our basins and jugs, and it was not easy to manage the washing department, unless the water was kept close to the fire. We rummaged our hostess' cupboards, unearthed some curious glass and plate, which we bought tolerably cheap.

7th.—Carlsen was determined to push on to Nystuen, which he considered a far better station, and, despite my fears about the weather, he would load the carriages, and then tried to get us off; but we hesitated, and before long a very

heavy fall of snow made it necessary to wait. The luggage was brought back; travellers arrived from Nystuen, where, they said, it was snowing heavily. Had we not been in possession of the only room, they would have halted, and remained, the stage having been a long one, and snow having fallen the whole way.

We amused ourselves pretty well; the landlady had fresh trout, reindeer, and good butter to offer us. Many travellers came in from the south to warm themselves; and as we had the guest-chamber we did the honours of the place. All spoke of the great frost and unusually cold weather.

CHAPTER XI.

HE next day (the 8th) weather very fine, and we enjoyed much the drive to Nystuen, which took us about three hours. This is the top of the Fille Fjeld. Found the hotel very comfortable. People were out sledging; so after luncheon we followed the fashion, took our first sledge drive, and, with our previously acquired skill, avoided all chances of coming to grief. We crossed the river on foot, as the ice was hardly strong enough to bear horses and sledges, inspected the cattle sheds of our landlord, and their winter arrangements; the cows, however, have not yet come in from the fields.

9th.—We had a little snow in the morning, but were able to have a long sledge drive in the afternoon. It was very enjoyable, although we were hardly sufficiently prepared with furs, or any of those necessary requirements for a Norwegian winter. It was surprising how comfortable we were in this little spot, how good the food (I dare say the air improved our appetites), and yet, according to our English habits, what we liked here we should have grumbled at anywhere else.

Here, in spite of our courier, we remained several days, sledging and walking over the frozen river, possibly to show our courage, which, however, one day received a shock which I, for one, did not easily get over. When half across, one morning the ice suddenly cracked with an alarming noise. The

guide called to me to run for my life, which I did, leaving my French maid, who had fallen down from fright, a helpless looking bundle on the ice. In due time, the danger, which, I believe, had more of noise than peril, disappeared; the guide returned, picked up Teresina, and we got safely back.

Our landlady was blessed with four great sons and three daughters, who managed to work the farm and keep the inn without servants. The Government pays them a certain sum for living at the top of the Fille Fjeld. The sons had taught themselves English during the long winter months, and were occupied in endeavouring to understand the Prophecies of Isaiah, through the aid of a Bible left them by some English *serious* tourist. We added to their library a

dictionary. When we left Nystuen the family were in grief, not at our departure, but because six sheep had been killed the previous night by bears. Government gives rewards for the destruction of bears, wolves, and eagles; but they are so numerous that if a horse or any animal is killed by any accident, the next morning nothing is left but a few polished bones, and possibly the tail.

At last one bright morning we started; the scenery on the road was very attractive, and the icicles from the waterfalls beautiful. The descent was very slippery, my carriage horse descended the steep pitches in a sitting position, which he must have found very uncomfortable; but I left him to practise his own habits and customs. The dress of the people, hitherto blue and red, changed

to green and red. We slept at a small station called Stee. Basins and jugs were not forthcoming. To each traveller is given a bucket, and we made the best of it. The natives next morning brought us old silver and such like things to look at; but we were not tempted. Our next halt was at Fagernaes, the first two days warm and fine, and then continuous rain that kept us indoors; luckily, the hotel is comfortable in every respect, and we were not sorry to be quiet.

Our journey to Sköien was most enjoyable, and here again we rested, as we were not anxious to reach Christiania till the beginning of November. The landlady made us exceedingly comfortable, and the food was excellent. Sköien must be an agreeable summer station. It was curious to see all the flocks com-

ing in for shelter during the winter months. The law is now very strict to ensure the poor creatures being sufficiently fed during the winter, as in former times they were not properly treated. As soon as the winter sets regularly in, all animal food is then killed, and hung up; indeed, throughout the country there is a general slaughter. Here there was no trace of snow. We left this place on a bright sunny morning, and pitched our tent for the night at Rosendal. Next day we went to the glass works at Hadeland, which are well worth seeing. Leaving this for Klaekken, we were very roughly treated by the man in charge of our horses—an unsightly cripple. He took our whips away, objected to our going out of a walk, shook his fist in our faces, and made himself generally unpleasant.

Except on this occasion, we have, during the whole of our tour, received from the people of all classes every possible courtesy and kindness. At Klaekken we admired much the Hønefos, a grand waterfall, with an immense volume of water, at that moment greatly increased by the late heavy rains.

Doing anything for the last time, knowing it to be so, is always sad, and I cannot agree in thinking a pleasure well over is a victory gained—at least we did not think so when we tucked ourselves into our respective carriages to make our last day's journey to Christiania, and give up that delightful Bohemian existence, the hardships of which exist only in the minds of those who have never travelled in Norway. I quite laugh when I think of the things my mother was advised to

provide before setting out on our travels, nearly all of which were useless and unnecessary. And so, on the 1st of November, we made our triumphal entry (if I may so term it) in drag-like procession into Christiania. For some reason which was never clear to my mind, whereas hitherto I had led the way all through our journey, my mother would drive first into the city, and, for reasons best known to herself, went rather fast. Teresina likewise, evidently anxious to prove to the world the experience she had gained in driving, pressed closely on me, so that between the pace my mother went and Teresina's anxiety to be close up, I fully expected a smash; but the Fates were propitious, and we finally drove in all possible state and grandeur to the Scandinavian Hotel. The cart and courier

were close behind, and we were welcomed back again to the world by host and hostess, to say nothing of the swallow-tailed waiter, with his white tie; in fact, we returned to civilisation, and are comfortably lodged *au troisième*—a wise step, as by that means we get the morning sun, and keep it long after the great folks below have lost it.

Perhaps any one who will take the trouble to read these little adventures will be somewhat puzzled to understand our various routes, or the different and somewhat sudden changes which we made, I may say both by flood and field; but, in sober truth, the changes from road to river, river to lake, fjords, and almost sea, are so frequent that before you arrive at a notion of a situation, you are suddenly, as in a transformation scene,

changed into something somewhere else. The courier, excellent man, would suddenly tell us, 'Now you must disembark, and drive,' and we did so. Equally abruptly we were taken on board a steamer, and so on; but through all these adventures—if they deserve the name—invariable kindness, hospitality, and courtesy greeted us wherever we went. When, as at the Romsdal, the weather was perfection, we were, it may be said, in the seventh heaven; when the rain or snow came down, we made the best of it—we accepted the chances of good and evil justly, and without complaining; and so I may say, with great truth and sincerity, not a cross word raised even a momentary cloud to mar the sunshine of our happy lives.

After dinner on the night of our ar-

rival I endeavoured to ascertain from my mother why she led the way, and drove at such a rapid pace into Christiania. Her Grace's answer was doubtful. The deduction, however, which I arrived at was, that our garments showed decided marks of long travel, and my mother was shy. Teresina was delighted to return. That she recounted her adventures to an admiring audience, I have no doubt ; but, in sober truth, very few ladies'-maids would have been so good-tempered, made themselves so useful, or fallen so readily into the changes and chances of our travels as did Teresina.

CHAPTER. XII.

DURING our tour we had at times very fully, and I may say gravely, considered the question of where we should winter. When we left London we had taken return tickets, thinking that most probably various causes, some of which we could not foresee, might compel us to return to England. Our arrangements for the winter might be influenced by health or climate, or by our proceedings and doings during the three months of our travels. But neither I nor my mother had experienced any inconvenience from the climate, or its varied changes: we had undergone heat, wet, damp, and

severe cold, yet we arrived in Christiania in rude health, and with what some of our fashionable friends might have called very dairy-maid-like complexions. On arrival at Christiania our letters were one and all satisfactory, and furnished no cause for any hurried return. There was the discomfort of the winter voyage if we did return, in itself no very agreeable prospect; there were pleasant little temptations here, there were new scenes, new society, and the reasonable hope of a pleasant and quiet life. We were assured that the climate was healthy. So, finally, we determined to remain; and we carefully considered and marked out our plans for a winter in Norway.

Such being our determination, there was nothing left for us to do but to make our arrangements and the neces-

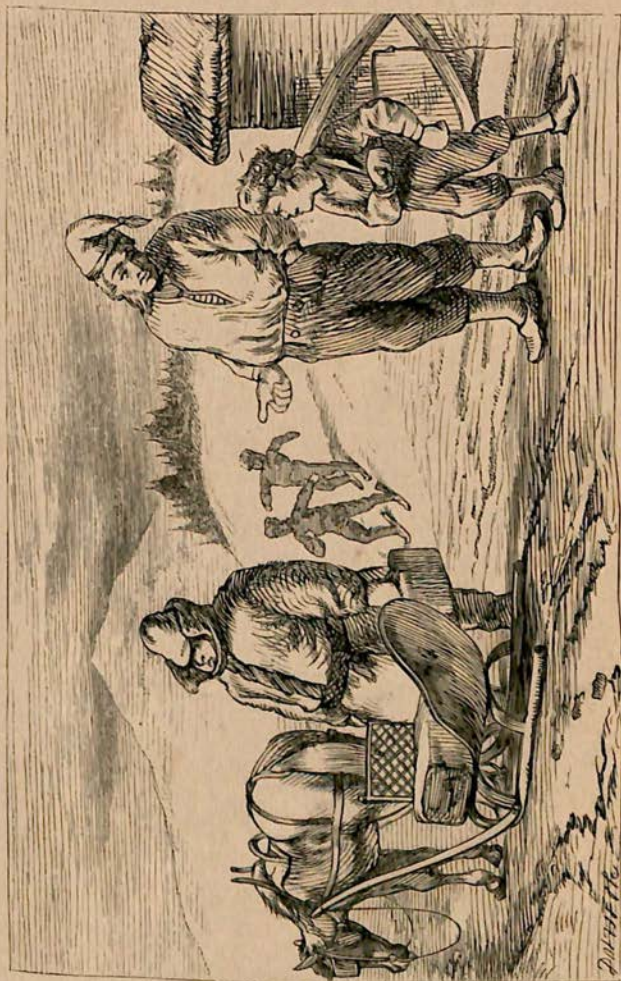
sary preparations for the winter. Our kind friend the Consul-General called immediately on our arrival, expressed great delight at our having determined to winter in Christiania, and gave us excellent advice as to the things to be procured, necessary alike both for our health and comfort. We largely invested in furs, and I confess, the first time I put on the complete suit adapted for the Norway winter, I never felt so nearly suffocated in all my life. The winter, however, which we had heard so much of, was a long time coming; the sky was beautifully clear, the thermometer hardly touched freezing-point, and there was a lightness in the air quite delightful. We began to doubt the reality of a Norwegian winter, or, at at any rate, to think that, like an English winter,

it was a very uncertain thing. We settled ourselves very comfortably in our hotel ; our rooms were all we could wish ; and Teresina, with extra aid called in, set to work to repair the injuries that travels by land and sea had inflicted on our wardrobes. I assisted her, though chiefly with suggestions, if my memory serves me right ; and the days passed rapidly on, and the evenings were devoted to reading and re-writing our journals. My mother and I having each kept a journal and memoranda of our doings, it became necessary that we should compare notes, and reduce the two to one correct and respectable account. Very merry fights we had over these journals. The main facts generally agreed ; the opinions were different, affected possibly by health, or better or

worse digestion, or more or less sleep. It is my firm conviction that my journal was the best, minus the dates, in which my mother was a long way ahead of me ; but they were very happy evenings, and so time passed rapidly. By and by a change came over the scene—clouds black as ink set in, and our belief in the doubtfulness of a Norwegian winter was destroyed. The precaution of fastening up double windows became very necessary ; each day the frost got harder and harder, the English steamers could hardly get out, the merchant vessels of Norway discharged their crews, and the ships were laid up for the winter, and the town settled itself to be frozen in.

When the Fjord began to freeze, it became a perfect mass of giant columns of steam curling up from the water,

almost rendering the vessels invisible, as if the sea had been bewitched, and turned into a seething mass of scalding water. This continued for a week, when it was pronounced safe ; then indeed winter had begun in all its severity. Sledges came in, wheels went out ; the life, habits, and customs were totally changed. The men and women whom a week previously you had seen dressed hardly different from what Bond Street would witness in December, now packed themselves up, the face unprotected, the head and ears well covered. They knew probably by experience what frost bites are ; and so, not to be behindhand, I followed the fashions, and so changed myself with my hood and furs that my own mother would not know me. I determined on a new order of things. I took into my counsel



SCENE ON FILLIE FIELD

Teresina and Mr. Schou, and, resolving to adopt the habits and customs of the country, I bought myself a pair of skates.

On the 26th of November we dined with the Consul-General, and were duly presented to the ladies and gentlemen attached to the Court, or in an official position. All were most kind, but few of the ladies spoke English, and we dared not display our peasant language; so that little progress was made in what, later in the season, proved to be very agreeable acquaintances.

CHAPTER XIII.

F my mother's journal is correct (and why should I doubt it?) my first experiment in the art of skating was made on the 27th of November. We went up early to Sinsen, and Mr. Schou with great kindness did all in his power to teach me. I felt that it was very desirable that I should master the art of skating, for my winter's comfort and amusement materially depended on my being able to progress safely over the ice, and obtain warmth and exercise at the same time.

No doubt the first attempts at skating are neither pleasing to the eye of the looker on, nor pleasant to the beginner,

who generally has a good deal of fear, and no small amount of peril and pain. Thanks to Mr. Schou's kindness, I succeeded beyond my most sanguine hopes; and when suddenly I found the support which he had afforded me withdrawn, I glided over the ice with an approach to ease and comfort. Success made me too bold, and a tumble was the consequence; painful, but not serious, although for a time it destroyed my confidence. My mother was anxious, as she watched me from the bank; but I feel sure, before the first lesson was over, she had gained confidence in the future of my skating; and indeed, later in the season, she took to it herself, and became a very skilful performer.

The Fjord being now pronounced safe, we daily went skating on the blue

transparent ice, so transparent indeed that you could see the stones and weeds at the bottom, and could almost imagine you were gliding over the water, till you fell down, and then found that it was indeed ice, and that ice is a very hard thing to fall upon. This happened very often when the skaters tried to pass the people on 'pige k lkers.' • Now I fear those who have not enlightened their minds by going to Norway will naturally ask, 'What, in heaven's name, is a pige k lker?' Well, it is a grand invention; the body is like a little sledge, with a place inside where the 'pige' (which means peasant girl) can stow away her marketings, and then sit on the box, and, with two little sticks with iron on the ends, push herself and her things along as fast as any skater, with



PICGE KELKA

hardly any exertion. They are, also used by the poor fishermen, whose only chance of earning anything during the long winter is to cut a little hole in the ice, and sit on their kelkers, and fish. I have seen dozens of strong able-bodied men sitting, nearly perished with cold, fishing at each of these little holes, his only remuneration at the end of the day being one or two dozen small whiting, or a handful of shrimps. Of course, under these circumstances, fish is only for the rich, while the ice lasts; and as lobsters cannot be got at, there is hardly employment left for the poor fishermen during the cold; and but for their most excellently managed soup-kitchen, which is one of their charities, and is nobly supported, they would be badly off indeed.

It is now the middle of December.

When the winter, so long expected, arrived at last, the sky was black as ink ; it blew a gale of wind from the north ; not a dog was to be seen in the streets ; and the occasional carrying away of the shutters that had been put up to protect the shop windows showed how strong the wind was. In a short time the snow followed—not as English snow falls, in a soft sprinkle, but so thick and so close together that it was like a sheet being held before the window, hiding everything from sight. This continued more or less for two days, then the sky again cleared ; the sun shone out as bright as ever, but this time on a white world ; and we were told that winter had arrived, and that the snow was down for the year. As the ice was now covered with snow, the Skating Club opened its operations.

Men and horses were constantly at work plying the handy little machines for throwing off the snow (which if allowed to lie rots the ice), till they had cleared about the space of two large fields, which at sundown they flooded, by means of little pipes, with fresh water, which froze and became an unblemished sheet of ice. The Skating Club is to Christiania what Rotten Row is to London. It has its fashionable hours—from twelve to two o'clock—when the dandies may be seen gracefully performing the figure of 8 upon the outer edge, or helping the ungraceful and spasmodic movements of English beginners. Like Rotten Row, it also has its unfashionable time, from two to four o'clock, when its devotees seem to avoid it like the pestilence; and its hours for the townfolk, who, after

work is over, sally out to skate by moon- or torch-light; and when they depart water is poured on the cut-up ice, which appears in renewed youth next day. Now the snow-plough appeared in the streets, to enable traffic to be resumed. It was a giant machine, drawn by ten horses, covered with bells, and accompanied by men and boys, who helped the horses up as they fell in the snow, which was knee-deep. As it passed along it left the road a hard smooth surface of beaten snow, the snow it had pushed away forming a wall on either side. It was carted away at once by sledges. The same process in miniature went on with the footpaths, and before noon the streets were arranged to perfection. The effect of everything dazzling white was beautiful, but it did not last

long, as the constant traffic in the town soon dirties the snow, and it looks like an ordinary road. Everything was now on sledges, and the people, instead of carrying their parcels, put them on small sledges or 'kelkers,' and pulled them along with a string. It was now extremely cold, twenty degrees (Réaumur) below freezing; the ladies took to hoods and fur boots; and we were warned never to wear veils till the cold was over, as the breath turns to ice on the veil, and would freeze the nose without one being aware of it. Should this most painful state of things occur, and your nose receive a blow, it would break off like a piece of china; or should you enter a hot room before it is unfrozen, you would be condemned to carry about a very red and disfigured nose for the rest

of your life. Strange to say, you never feel as cold as on a raw day in England. We were anxious to make a sledging expedition, and although we were warned of the risk of catching cold, and advised not to go, we rolled ourselves up in our long fur coats, which reached to our feet, and went out sledging. Nothing could be conceived more lovely than the appearance of the country ; the forests of fir-trees were nearly bowed down to the ground with the weight of the snow on them ; the murmurs of the waterfalls were stilled ; the quiet was very striking, and as far as the eye could reach you saw mountain upon mountain, and valley after valley of untrodden snow, reflecting back the brilliancy of the sun, and having the effect of making the blue sky near them look perfectly grey. Everything

was white, even our driver's moustache and the coats and tails of his horses, as the breath and perspiration immediately turn to ice in the intense cold. On our return home, as I was going into the hotel, I was horrified by being told by the waiter that I had better not go into a hot room before putting some snow on one of my ears, as it looked very white. A person who had seen us get out of our sledge had requested him to warn me of the danger. This good advice I followed. At first I did not know where it was touched, but at the end of a few moments it felt as if the snow was hot iron, and feeling came back again. After this lesson I took to going about with my head all tied up, like the other ladies, as if one had the toothache.

It is all very well to sneer at Christ-

mas gaieties being dreary, but that season comes but once a year, and I confess I love to see it kept with all honour as it is in Norway. For weeks before, everybody, rich and poor all alike, are busily engaged in making presents for their relations and friends, to be hung on the Christmas-tree, and a perfect forest of such trees blossom into existence on Christmas Eve. Everybody is in good humour for that day, everyone eats more than is good for them, and the entire house goes through a thorough cleansing, in accordance with the superstition that at twelve o'clock at night the Saviour passes through the rooms, and if they be not in order, He does not put His hand to bless and preserve ; and unhappiness for the year is the result. The streets are all decorated ; the very birds

are not forgotten, for at every habitation and farmstead large bunches of oats are put out to give them a banquet. My mother took to giving them hot breakfast regularly, and hundreds of sparrows were her guests; they knew the proper hour, and if kept waiting, would chirp and flap their wings against the window with passion.

CHAPTER XIV.

ND so the winter progressed. My journal and my mother's notes tell pretty regularly of our daily doings, skating, walking, sledging, and such like proceedings. The winter was very severe, but our rooms were warm and comfortable, fuel plentiful and cheap, our landlord liberal with his candles, our food excellent; and altogether our apartments of an evening looked light and cheerful, and so well lighted up, that a stranger entering might have imagined we were about to receive company. We worked on these evenings steadily at our journals and sketches; the latest arrival from England had brought us a

good supply of books, newspapers, including 'Punches' for the last three months, some few things from Fortnum and Mason, and some pleasant letters. Postal communication was difficult, and, in fact, we were completely shut up in our Norway home.

About thirty years ago the population of Christiania did not exceed 35,000. It is now estimated, including the suburbs, at 70,000, and is assuming, with respect to style of buildings and variety of picturesque villas in the outskirts, the characteristics of other European towns.

Our Christmas pleasures were entirely spoilt by the serious illness of our kind friend the Consul-General, brought about by his going to church and catching a severe cold. For many weeks we were very anxious about him, but, thank God,

his valuable life was spared to his family and friends.

We dined on Christmas Day with the Rev. Mr. Crowther, and had a most agreeable evening. It is the custom in this country, towards the end of the Christmas holidays, for parties of young people to visit from house to house in peasant characters. They call, are admitted, and after playing their parts, are offered an entertainment easily provided from the plentifully stored larder of every well-to-do farmer or proprietor.

In the neighbourhood of a city like Christiania, it might happen that the master and mistress of the establishment might be from home when the visit was made. To guard against this Mr. Schou was asked if the party might call on a certain evening; and preparations

were accordingly made for the expected guests.

They were nearly twenty in number, and took the character of a wedding party. We had the bride and bridegroom; the master of the ceremonies, with his silver tankard full of good wine, offered constantly to all his speeches, etc.; the schoolmaster and clerk, both grave throughout the evening; the fiddler from the nearest town; the friends, men and women. They sang and played and danced till nearly twelve o'clock, when they went off to another house, and we returned home.

On the 2nd of January 1868, I find myself and my mother appearing in snow-shoes, and enjoying ourselves immensely at Mr. Schou's. On the 4th we went to Holgerslus, the country villa of

Madame de Lövenshiold. We amused ourselves with kelkers for three hours, dined and home by moonlight to Christiania, about five English miles. Nothing can be more Alpine in character, or more rich, than the scenery in this spot.

Our notes from day to day mention frost, and our usual amusements. On the evening of the 21st of January, we went to Stalsraad Stang's ball ; there was a vast amount of decoration and ceremony, the entertainment being given by the Prime Minister in honour of H.R.H. Prince Oscar of Norway and Sweden, it being in fact the anniversary of his first appearance in the world. If my memory serves me right, I have made no mention of French milliners, and all that appertains to their honourable and useful calling, as it exists in Christiania.



KELKA BAKKE

Our boxes and bags were destitute of ball dresses, as indeed they were incapable of carrying any ; so we betook ourselves to the most fashionable modiste, and were well satisfied with the results. Balls in Christiania are very much like balls anywhere else, and, for myself, I can only add, that the ball at Stalsraad Stang's enabled me to pass a very pleasant evening.

I find little or no change in our daily doings till the 4th of February. That time is looked forward to by all the peasants in the country, for it is the Carnival week for Christiania. Then the usually quiet streets are crowded with country folk in national costume. Horses for sale are led about, and the women sell the stuff they have woven during the year. The great national

fair fills up the principal square. Then there are trotting races every day on the ice. The racecourse is a mile and a half long, and of course kept clear from snow. The horses race one at a time, in carriages; they are timed, and the horse that accomplishes the distance in fewest minutes, without breaking out of a trot, wins a medal; this takes away all excitement from the bystanders, but the groups of horses and peasants on the ice would be quite worthy of Rosa Bonheur. In the evening we walked about the fair, and very good fun it was. Every well-to-do peasant was tipsy, but perfectly polite; there were national dances, a merry-go-round, and a circus, but this had been deprived of its show horse, as, while being driven up the Fjord in gay procession, the ice suddenly

cracked and swallowed up both the intelligent steed and the carriage. During this week we went to many Carnival parties, which consist in making up a large party, and sledging miles away into the country to some rural inn, where, after passing several hours in running down the mountain sides quick as lightning on kelkers, or going across the country on snow-shoes (two or three yards long), you return to your inn, eat the best of dinners, dance or play cards, and return by moonlight. Sometimes we returned by the same road, and sometimes on the Fjord, which a partial thaw had cleared from snow, and left a solid sheet of ice, so solid that unless the horse got into one of the many fish holes (which are always shown by the branch of a tree) there was no possibility of

coming to grief. The Carnival finished with a large masquerade in the theatre. The dresses could not have been better, and although solemn and grave at the beginning of the evening—no one liking to be the first to make a fool of himself—we soon warmed up and amused ourselves in real earnest. Some time after this, I received an invitation to dine at the Convent. The order is not a very strict one, as the fair recluses are allowed to give dinners and suppers, from which cavaliers are not excluded; and I never was at a merrier party anywhere than within its walls. It is an establishment for maiden ladies, and every far-seeing father puts down the names of his girls as soon as they are born—especially if they are a yearly occurrence, and he not a rich man. Thus

by a trifling annual payment, should they not marry (which is rather the fashion in Norway), when they become fat, fair, and forty, they are entitled to two very nice rooms in this most charming Convent, and live as if in their father's house. There are forty spinsters residing now in the Convent, giving daily tea parties, peaceably sharing with each other the gossip of the town, and giving the contradiction to those foolish men who pretend that ladies always quarrel among themselves, and that no society of women can go on happily by itself. To the astonishment of the Norwegians the winter passed away at the beginning of March; the rain melted the snow on the roofs, from which it fell in mimic avalanches into the middle of the street; the roads became so full of holes that

the diligence stopped, and your carriage could only advance at a walk, if you did not wish to have your driver jerked off his perch behind. The hares even changed their white coats to grey, and the larks began to sing.

Under the depressing influence of spring, we were all getting rather dull, when the news arrived that the King was coming. When first the citizens heard it, they thought the news too good to be true, as they had not seen him for two years; but when the report was confirmed, they got into a state of delight and loyalty highly creditable to a people who consider all men equal, and are too proud to allow of an aristocracy. For days before the King's arrival, hundreds of workmen were employed pecking up with pickaxes the snow off the

road to the Palace, which was very hard work, as it had become so compact and solid that it looked like paving stones when removed. At length all was ready, and one fine night, when the streets were thronged and the town illuminated, the King arrived, and was conducted, amid the shouts of his people, to the Palace. To illuminate by putting candles in the windows sounds in these days ridiculous, but the effect from the street is gorgeous when every house from attic to cellar has eleven or twelve candles in each window, backed up by flowers ; it is free from the vulgarity of the gas illuminations, and has the advantage of being independent of the weather. Next day all the inhabitants went in procession, with banners and bands, to congratulate the King on his recovery.

CHAPTER XV.

UR winter in Norway was indeed drawing to a close, but before I conclude my account of our proceedings in Christiania during the last four months, I shall endeavour, by referring back to my notes and my mother's correct dates, to bring together in a few sentences the little doings and incidents which have been altogether omitted.

One of our pleasures during the winter, of which I have hitherto made no mention, was the theatre. Thanks to the kindness of the directors, we had stalls for all the performances, and as the places are secured generally long

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before the season begins, this favour to us was of the greatest advantage. It made a great break in a séjour which might otherwise have become monotonous, as without this resource we should have been for many nights continuously alone in our hotel. The performances were most excellent. Our enjoyment of them was greatly facilitated by our having during the winter engaged a master to give us lessons in the language. Our progress was fair. At first our comprehension of the dramas performed was small, and the aid of friends was necessary to enable us to arrive at a full knowledge of all that was going on, but towards the conclusion of our sojourn in Christiania we really understood a considerable portion of all that was said, and could make out the story. The

theatre is of a good size, rather larger than the Haymarket. The scenery and dresses were excellent, and on the fashionable nights the house was so crowded that standing room could not be obtained; indeed, it was always well attended. In addition there was a company of French dancers, whose performances were excellent, and in some parts exceedingly amusing.

Mr. Schou gave us a charming ball towards the end of February; about 200 people were present, and the music, lighting, supper, to say nothing of excellent dancing partners, made the evening all that could be wished. The balls here usually begin about eight; and, covered up in furs, we sledged home, and were generally safe in our rooms by one o'clock.

My mother has purchased a pair of Norwegian ponies ; they are strong, active, and very hardy animals, between 14 and 15 hands high, and can go along at an excellent pace. There was another pair which we should have liked better ; but a gentleman (a *nouveau riche*) intercepted them on the road, purchased, and carried them off. I trust we shall be fortunate enough to get our ponies safe to England, and that they will repay us for our trouble and anxiety.

The early breaking up of the winter has been a great source of disappointment. Usually the month of March has been safe for skating, sledging, and other winter diversions, but slush and dirt have taken the place of frost and snow ; in addition to which, every one, judging from the variety of toilets, is puzzled to

know what is the best or the most prudent garment to put on during the sudden changes of the temperature.

One of our last gay doings was a dinner given to the King by the Statsraad Stang; and this was followed by a ball. The whole affair was done in a very princely manner. We had the honour of an introduction to the King, and nothing could exceed the courtesy and kindness with which His Majesty received us. A description of a ball can only be a repetition of what we have all seen. In a large city like Christiania, containing a considerable society, a military force, and an ample supply of French milliners, it is enough to say that there was good music, good food, an immense amount of candles, and an excellent ball-room. I enjoyed the

ball very much, and considered it a charming conclusion to our Norway trip. I have not said much in reference to our various trips in the winter, to the museums, picture-galleries, and such like places; but are they not written in Murray? There is a far better description of them there than any that I could hope to give. Sufficient for me to say, we did all these things correctly, inspected the parliament houses, and envied the King and his Ministers the fact that Parliament only meets every *three* years. A great 'blessing' I believe, and, if practised in our country, it would be doubtless a great convenience to the party in power. Such a system would possibly work quite as well as the annual row we have in England, and the attempt to change the Government once a year.

But our days in Christiania were drawing to a conclusion. The Fjord was open, the weather clear, the 'North Star' expected, and we began, somewhat unwillingly, to make preparations for our departure. I may say with all sincerity that I was very sorry this period had arrived.

I had thoroughly enjoyed myself. All the perils and dangers held out before us previous to our departure from England had proved to be groundless; we had had endless amusements, we had enjoyed perfect health, and in fact our lives had been free from care and anxiety. The great kindness and hospitality we had received in Norway would have made us more than ungrateful if we had not felt sincere regret at leaving those who had contributed so largely

to make our stay in Christiania agreeable.

And thus, when early on the morning of the 30th of March the news was brought in that during the night the 'North Star' had arrived, and would return again to England on the 3rd of April, there was nothing left for us but to prepare for our departure, and we did so with feelings of regret which we should have found it difficult to describe. So once more packing commenced. Again the large bags and small boxes were brought up for use, but, alas! our worldly goods had greatly increased since our arrival. A light cart, be it remembered, had carried them to Wapping, a very small cart had carried them at Christiania to the Victoria Hotel; but now the original luggage was but a small item in our amount of

baggage. Ball-dresses took up room, furs required cases and careful packing; fancy articles, the production of the country, added much to our collection of odds and ends; and then, though last not least, a pair of ponies added greatly to the weight of our worldly goods, and largely to our anxiety.

In addition to packing, our days were occupied in taking leave of all our kind friends. And now our last farewells were spoken, the last cards left. We had seen our ponies carefully put on board. The final act of paying the hotel bill was satisfactorily arranged, and we were thankful to retire early to our beds, thinking perhaps anxiously, yet hopefully, of the weather, previous experience having taught us that our comforts for the next four or five days were matters

by no means depending on ourselves, but upon wind and weather ; and so for the last time we rested comfortably in that excellent establishment, the Scandinavian Hotel.

CHAPTER XVI.

CONCLUSION.

HE 3rd of April arrived. The last few days had passed away rapidly, and when the Consul-General, whose care and kindness towards us have been incessant, drove us down to the harbour at seven A.M., we felt quite sad. It seemed more like leaving our home than returning, as in truth we were, to England, home, friends, the gay world, and all the comforts that London abounds in. The Consul-General's family likewise came to see us off, and, indeed, all our Norwegian friends with whom we were intimate. The embarkation was a contrast to that of our

departure from England. No dirty wharfs or dirtier lamps ; but in a bright morning, surrounded by the kindest of friends, we once more stood on the deck of the ' North Star,' and again took possession of the cabin in which we had undergone so much suffering. It was a bright and lovely morning. The bell rang ; there was the usual commotion consequent on departure ; the steersman takes possession of the wheel ; kind farewells are hurriedly exchanged ; earnest hopes and wishes are expressed that we would visit again this happy country ; our friends are hurried on shore ; and we are once more three unprotected females moving on the waters. The ship proceeded steadily down the Fjord. For a long time we remained on deck, and watched the last flutter of the hand-

kerchiefs which told us our friends were still watching, and, as I truly believe, regretting our departure. We sat watching Christiania, its innumerable villas dotting the shores of the Fjord, many of them inhabited by friends whose acquaintance we had enjoyed; the Castle of Agershuus overlooking our former skating ground; the background formed by hills covered with pine forests, which we had so often admired from our windows, till all was hidden from our view by a rocky point;—all these agreeable sights we left with sincere regrets. The good wishes of our friends seemed likely to be realised: the weather was fine, and the absence of wind truly delightful. During the night we were detained a short time by fog, and had to lay-to; but were able to land at Christiansand in time for breakfast

on the 4th. Cargo had to be taken in here, which enabled us to remain till five o'clock, and gave us an opportunity of driving into the country, which is pretty with rocks, firs, and cascades. Ernst's Hotel we found exceedingly comfortable, and we fared as well as on our first landing last July. On board again; the weather clear and cold. Our comfortable fur-lined cloaks enabled us to remain on deck, and the evening closed in, the sun disappearing in bright and glorious colours; and as it sank beneath the horizon, the shores and the land on which we had spent such happy months passed from our sight. Dear old Norway, I shall always love you, always cherish in my heart the recollection of your beauty, the kindness of your people, and the happiness I enjoyed among them.

Farewell, dear Norway, let me hope not for ever. Let me at least cherish the belief that I may, ere long, visit you again—visit you in the same spirit of enjoyment, and tended by the same gentle hand which has at all times smoothed away the difficulties in my path, and made my life a blessing unmingled with care. Farewell, dear Norway, till we meet again.

We had but few passengers. Our ponies seemed comfortable and contented with their fate, and even Teresina showed no signs of discomfort, save and except a certain disinclination to eat; in fact, our passage was a good one, and our sufferings far less than before. I cannot say I was well. Teresina was slightly uncomfortable. My mother, being really an excellent sailor, enjoyed the voyage.

The weather permitted me to be on deck during a considerable portion of our return voyage, which I much enjoyed; we also occasionally visited and fed our ponies, and thus the hours quickly passed. The occasional excitement of passing other vessels took off the monotony of the voyage, and at length we sighted the English coast; and after an excellent passage we came to the Newcastle Wharf at Wapping at two o'clock on the morning of the 7th of April. The clamour of loud voices as noisy as on our departure, with sundry bumps, to say nothing of the noise of letting off the steam, assured us of our arrival. Soon after all was still, and slumber visited the crew of the 'North Star.'

Early in the morning Custom-House officers disturbed our quiet. We soon

landed, and by ten A.M. we were once again in our own home. Ten months had passed away — months of varied incident and changing scenes, and great enjoyment. Yet we certainly did appreciate the comforts of home, as no one can fail to do after so long an absence. It is only by contrast that we truly value and understand the substantial luxury of a London home, added to the neatness and order which are only to be found in an English house. And thus my story ends, and I lay down my pen, trusting to the indulgence and kindness of those who read this little book, that they will deal tenderly with my attempt to recount my adventures during a Summer and Winter in Norway.



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